

civilized society? I don't think so. Not a chance.

Even worse, I can't believe we are asking the people of Leavenworth to hang out with the "welcome terrorists" banner or put out the welcome mat to terrorists or to share their community not only with terrorists but with every protestor who will inevitably show up or with every terrorist who will view a facility on the mainland as a target, as they do. And before someone says Fort Leavenworth is secure, let me tell you it is secure all right; but for military prisoners who are compliant and for civilian prisoners who are not on a jihad against America.

Guantanamo Bay is a fortress, a humane, Red Cross-approved fortress, but a fortress nonetheless. Moving such a facility to hometown, USA, will require security beyond reality. I can't even begin to imagine what it would look like at Leavenworth, but I do know it is unrealistic to think a place such as Leavenworth, which has a railroad running through it and a river running next to it and highways all around it, would not be secure. No, it is not secure enough. In fact, the only place that is would have to be a fortress in the middle of nowhere—or Guantanamo Bay.

Let's also not forget the cost to taxpayers if such a thing would actually happen. We would not be able to mix these prisoners with the general prison population there, let alone the public. We would have to build a hospital and medical facilities, exercise and eating facilities, places for religious worship, and the list goes on and on and on. We have that at Gitmo. If anyone thinks that is crazy, I recommend they travel to Gitmo and take a look. They already have all of those facilities there. In fact, the medical facilities I saw are better than most in most of our small rural communities in this country.

Why we keep coming back to this ridiculous argument, why we keep trivializing the crimes committed by those at Gitmo, and why we keep offering up our American communities as a reasonable alternative is beyond me.

But I will say this: not in our backyard, not in Kansas, not on this Senator's watch, not on my watch. I don't know how many times I have to say or shout this on the Senate floor before this misbegotten idea is put to rest. But trust me—trust me—I will continue to do it until we come to our senses or until one of my colleagues who wants to close Gitmo offers a site in their State as a reasonable alternative.

One Senator has a lot of tools in his toolbox for keeping the Senate tied up in knots. If someone gets the bright idea of moving these prisoners to Kansas, we can all cancel our summer travel plans because we are going to be spending a lot of time here doing nothing. Come to think of it, that might be a better alternative as to where we are headed.

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor.

Madam President, it has come to my attention that I don't think we have a quorum, so I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WEAPON SYSTEMS ACQUISITION REFORM ACT

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I am pleased to cosponsor the Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act, which would overhaul our defense procurement system and improve mechanisms for identifying and eliminating waste. I thank Senators LEVIN and MCCAIN for introducing this critical piece of legislation and recognize them for their effort moving it through the Armed Services Committee.

This bill is an essential step toward eliminating wasteful inadequacies that have permeated the weapons procurement system. I am sure my colleagues share my deep concern about the Government Accountability Office's conclusion last year that "... DOD [acquisition] programs continue to be sub-optimal" resulting in "... lost buying power and [lost] opportunities to recapitalize the force."

This is unconscionable and unacceptable for the world's strongest military power, especially as we continue to have troops in harm's way.

Today, Senators LEVIN and MCCAIN will discuss some of the most egregious examples of a lack of oversight in the acquisition process and cost discrepancies that surfaced over time. This is why this bill requires the Secretary of Defense to implement mechanisms that guarantee consideration of the tradeoffs between major weapon systems cost, schedule, and performance at each phase of the procurement process.

This bill would give the Department of Defense the tools it needs to improve the acquisition process to avoid "sub-optimal" results, reduce waste, and ensure that the cost of developing specific weapon systems is commensurate with our defense needs.

According to Secretary Gates, this will require "... a holistic assessment of capabilities, requirements, risks and needs" which will entail, among other things, "... a fundamental overhaul of our approach to procurement, acquisition and contracting."

Both President Obama and Secretary Gates have indicated their strong support for this legislation because they want to do everything in their power to protect our troops, advance national security goals, and keep America safe.

Unfortunately, we will not get a refund from the mistakes of the past, but we can make better decisions today that will lay the foundation for more pragmatic decisionmaking in the future.

The military challenges we are facing today are unlike conventional wars of the past. Let me repeat. The military challenges we face today are unlike wars of the past and, therefore, require a reconfiguration of defense spending. I agree with the assessment of leading defense experts that we must better prepare to win the wars we are in, as opposed to those we may wish to be in.

Last month, I had the privilege of traveling with Senator JACK REED to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, where it was abundantly clear that we must focus future spending on our growing counterinsurgency needs.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, we are engaged in a four-stage process of shaping the environment, clearing the insurgents with military power, holding the area with effective security forces and police, and building through a combination of governance and economic development.

The four stages, again, are shaping the environment, clearing the insurgents, holding the area, and building through a combination of governance and economic development.

In order to be successful in this complex process, we must ensure that our commanders have the necessary tools to effectively engage in counterinsurgency operations, and this requires a fundamental rebalancing of our defense priorities.

As we shift resources from Iraq to Afghanistan, we hear over and over, we are facing potential shortages of some of the high-demand equipment and "critical enablers," such as UAV operators, engineers, air traffic controllers, and road-clearing units.

The allocation of these scarce resources forces our military leadership to make difficult decisions as it balances competing needs in Afghanistan and Iraq. These shortages underscore—underscore—why we must eliminate waste and reshape our defense priorities.

It is in this regard that I wish to highlight section 105 of this bill which directs the Joint Requirements Oversight Council to seek and consider input from combatant commanders prior to identifying joint military requirements.

This provision is essential because it incorporates the views of our commanders on the ground to ensure they have the tools they need to better protect our troops, defeat militants, and succeed in our missions overseas.

As Secretary Gates wrote in "Foreign Affairs" earlier this year, we must

build innovative thinking and flexibility into the procurement process, and “the key is to make sure that the strategy and risk assessment drive the procurement, rather than the other way around.”

This is why we must institutionalize these changes into the procurement process which must be flexible enough to respond to developments on the ground and better equip our troops to engage in counterinsurgency.

I wish we had the procurement system set up under this bill years ago, but it is never too late to institute needed change. I thank the authors, Senator LEVIN and Senator MCCAIN, of this important initiative and encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAUFMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

DOMESTIC AUTO INDUSTRY

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, it is critically important to the country and to my State of Wisconsin that we do everything we can to preserve an American auto manufacturing industry. The domestic auto industry has been vital to the economic development of Wisconsin for much of the last century, but that industry is undergoing a rapid restructuring right now, and I am very concerned about how this restructuring will affect communities in Wisconsin.

We need an American auto industry, but it can't be American in name only. American jobs must be protected. Unfortunately, the auto restructuring plans that have been put forward contain proposals that ship jobs overseas. That is not acceptable to me or to my constituents. The taxpayer dollars that are propping up the industry should be used to preserve family-supporting jobs in Wisconsin and around the country.

My State of Wisconsin has been hard hit by the troubles in the auto industry over the past year. There are two major auto plants located in my State—a General Motors plant in my hometown of Janesville, and a Chrysler engine plant in Kenosha. In addition, there are a dozen companies in Wisconsin that support these two plants, including supply companies and car dealers.

Both the Janesville and Kenosha plants have received grim news from GM and Chrysler over the past year, including last year's announcement that production would cease at the GM Janesville plant and this week's statement that the Kenosha engine plant would close at the end of 2010.

The Wisconsin community, including workers, economic development officials, technical colleges, workforce development groups, Governor Doyle, the Federal congressional delegation, and others have mobilized to assist these communities in the larger region in responding to this troubling news from both GM and Chrysler.

I supported carving out some of the Wall Street bailout funds to help U.S. automakers because unlike the money heading to Wall Street firms, the money provided to the automakers actually had a chance of preserving essential jobs in the United States. But that doesn't mean we should give auto companies a blank check, which is why I said that any Federal assistance provided to the automakers should come with requirements that the industry reform itself, including producing more fuel efficient cars that Americans are now demanding. When Congress failed to pass legislation to provide Federal loans to the auto industry, I applauded then-President Bush for stepping in and using some of the Wall Street bailout money to help the auto industry while also requiring that the companies submit restructuring plans.

Frankly, I am appalled that the automakers that received taxpayer assistance are not prioritizing the retention of American jobs, including jobs in Wisconsin. Over the past several months, I have heard concerns from the workers at the Chrysler Kenosha Engine Plant that work that Chrysler had promised to assign to the Kenosha plant might no longer actually be assigned to the Kenosha plant. At the same time, Kenosha's workforce told me that the same work would likely continue as scheduled at a plant in Mexico.

In response to these concerns, I led a letter in early April, cosigned by Senator KOHL, Representative RYAN, and Representative MOORE, to Secretary Geithner and National Economic Council Director Larry Summers. The letter urged the administration to consider including a priority for saving auto manufacturing jobs in the United States as the administration worked with the auto companies to craft restructuring plans. I received a response from Secretary Geithner that said it was the administration's hope that any Chrysler restructuring deal “will help ensure that we retain as many Chrysler jobs as possible in Wisconsin . . .”

Despite this assurance, the Kenosha community found out through media last week that in fact no Chrysler jobs would be retained at the Kenosha Engine Plant. Instead the Kenosha community was informed that the Kenosha plant would close by the end of 2010 while a Mexican plant slated to build the same product that has been promised to the Kenosha facility would remain open.

This news, which was not heard directly from the company itself, outraged the Kenosha community and other Wisconsinites who believe that

their tax dollars should not be used to save jobs overseas, but should instead be used to save jobs in the United States and in Wisconsin—and rightly so. The Federal delegation, State and local officials, and the Kenosha workforce are united in working together to try to persuade the administration and Chrysler to reconsider this terrible decision.

I understand tough decisions need to be made as these companies restructure themselves. But both Chrysler and GM have received billions of American taxpayer dollars since December and the companies as well as the administration need to take steps to help ensure that those taxpayer dollars are being utilized for the purpose they were intended—to save American jobs. If Chrysler is going to close the Kenosha plant as well as other domestic plants while keeping its overseas facilities open, then we need to think seriously about whether it is in the interest of the American taxpayers to provide continued financial assistance to the company.

There may still be some hope for the Chrysler Engine Plant in Kenosha and the GM Assembly Plant in Janesville, and other American plants—if the administration steps up. The Janesville community is waiting to hear whether or not the incentive package it presented to GM will be accepted and the Kenosha community is waiting to hear whether Chrysler's decision to close the Kenosha plant will be reconsidered. Over the years, both the Kenosha and Janesville workers have been commended for their productivity, their creativity, and their willingness to negotiate fairly with the management at each plant and both communities are great locations for retooled auto companies to thrive in the future.

The first priority of any company receiving Federal taxpayer assistance should be to preserve jobs within the United States and I call upon the administration, Chrysler, and GM to reexamine their restructuring plans to make the preservation of U.S. jobs the top priority of these plans. I will continue to do all I can to support Wisconsin's workers and local communities in their efforts both to respond to these decisions and to ensure these auto companies prioritize saving auto manufacturing jobs in Wisconsin as the restructuring process moves forward in the coming days and weeks.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.